

Overhead #1

The French in Detroit owned slaves in the 1700s.

When the British took over Detroit, they also had slaves. Records from 1782 show that 79 men and 100 women were slaves.

In 1810, Detroit was part of the United States. Records show 120 free blacks and 24 slaves living in the region.

Slavery in Michigan ended when it became a state in 1837. Slave catchers from the south continued to come to the region in search of escaped slaves.

From 1830 to 1861, Detroit was a major stop on the Underground Railroad. Many escaped slaves were trying to get to Canada. While some crossed the river, some stayed in Detroit.

Overhead #2

By 1870, the African American population of Detroit was 2,235. This was less than 3% of the total population.

The African American population grew slowly from 1870 to the early 1900s.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, there was a growing number of complaints of discrimination against African Americans at places such as restaurants.

When Detroit celebrated its 200th birthday in 1901:

- most African Americans were in service professions that included waiters and maids;
- African Americans with factory jobs got the worst jobs in the factories; and
- African Americans with college degrees had trouble finding work in their field.